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Defiant Franken resigns

By Alan Fram
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Sen. Al Franken, a rising political star only weeks ago, reluctantly announced Thursday he is resigning from Congress, succumbing to a torrent of sexual harassment allegations and evaporating support from fellow Democrats. But he fired a defiant parting shot at President Donald Trump and other Republicans he said have survived much worse accusations.

"I of all people am aware that there is some irony in the fact that I am leaving while a man who has bragged on tape about his history of sexual assault sits in the Oval Office, and a man who has repeatedly preyed on young girls campaigns for the Senate with the full support of his party," Mr. Franken said.

He was only the first lawmaker to announce his departure from Congress on Thursday.

The 66-year-old Minnesotan, a

SEE **FRANKEN**, PAGE A-5

REMEMBERING PEARL HARBOR

Lake Fong/Post-Gazette

World War II veteran Nick Diloreto, 93, of Scott listens to a speech during a luncheon for veterans at Country Meadows of the South Hills on Thursday, the 76th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Injured linebacker Ryan Shazier has surgery to stabilize his spine

Steelers: Life more important than football

By Ed Bouchette
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The news that linebacker Ryan Shazier had spinal stabilization surgery hit the Steelers in different ways, but one thing they did not want to talk about Thursday was the linebacker's football future.

"I'm not worried about him playing for us again, I'm more worried about him," defensive coordinator Keith Butler said. "Y'all have been updated as much as we have. The thing that we're hopeful for and prayerful for is that he comes back and he'll be OK. The football stuff is secondary. His life is a lot more important to me than football."

That was the general theme among his teammates as well.

Shazier playing again is "the last thing I'm concerned about," said linebacker Arthur Moats, who may be one of those who replaces him on the football field Sunday night against Baltimore. "After seeing him on the field like that [Monday], I want to see him just walk. That was scary to see him roll over like that on the field."

Guard Ramon Foster, the team's player representative to their union, said the team told players not to say anything about Shazier's condition: "I refuse to say anything about it because whatever it is is very sensitive

SEE **SURGERY**, PAGE A-8

Inside
What's next for the Steelers' defense?
Sports, D-1

Family will be among first to be evaluated for medical pot

By Steve Twedt
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Diana Briggs sees this as the start of the end of a four-year battle to persuade politicians, and now doctors, to help her son.

Friday morning, Ms. Briggs, 47, husband Michael, 48, and daughters Alexis, 21, and Hailey, 12, will drive from their home in Export to the Compassionate Certification Center offices in the Gateway 2 building, Downtown.

There they have an appointment to have son and brother Ryan, 17, be among the first of the more than 8,000 Pennsylvanians who want to be evaluated for certification in the state's new medical marijuana program.

"Friday is a big day for our family. It's been a big month for our family," said Ms. Briggs in a phone interview Wednesday.

To get a medical marijuana

SEE **MEDICAL**, PAGE A-2

Darrell Sapp/Post-Gazette

Mayor Bill Peduto, at left, says Kevin Acklin is his administration's right arm. Mr. Acklin, center, announced his resignation Thursday as the mayor's chief of staff.

Peduto chief of staff Acklin stepping down

By Adam Smeltz
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Kevin Acklin, the high-octane, influential aide who shepherded Pittsburgh Mayor Bill Peduto's policies and priorities over four years, will step down in January.

Mr. Acklin, a quick-witted chief of staff who once ran for mayor, will leave just as the mayor begins a second term. Mr. Peduto, who likened Mr. Acklin to his administration's right arm, said he had not identified a successor.

Public service is "true to his heart, true to his family," Mr. Peduto said before City Council, where he announced Mr. Acklin's departure during a budget hearing Thursday. "There's very few people willing to make those types of

SEE **ACKLIN**, PAGE A-7

Shortage of blue bags sparks call for recycling bins

By Diana Nelson Jones
Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Giant Eagle's temporary loss of the blue bags it uses to hold groceries may have created a recycling snag for some consumers, but those little bags cause other snags that have recycling advocates calling for an end to plastic bags altogether.

Giant Eagle spokesman Dick Roberts said the switch to tan bags started after Hurricane Harvey interrupted production of blue bags at Giant Eagle's supplier in Texas and that the blue bags should return in January.

But the timing provides an opportunity for Pittsburgh and other municipalities to commit to bins, said Justin Stockdale, executive director of the Pennsylvania Resources Council in Pittsburgh.

In the city, placing items in blue bags or blue bins indicates to the

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Weather
Partly sunny and cold.
Daytime high 35,
tonight's low 21.
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